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THE  
TRUE AND VERY REMARKABLE STORY  
OF A

# BLIND IRISHMAN

WHO WAS

RESTORED TO SIGHT

WHEN NEARLY AN HUNDRED YEARS OF AGE.



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THE  
BLIND IRISHMAN

*RESTORED TO SIGHT.*

A CLERGYMAN in the South of Ireland, who was in the habit of affording medical assistance to his poor neighbours, was called on to go and see a child in the cottage of a Catholic, that had fallen into the fire, and was badly burned. Walking about the cottage while they were undressing the child, he heard a muttering noise in one of the bed rooms, and, looking in, he perceived an old man sitting up in a bed, praying most fervently : but took no more notice of him, as the old Catholics are much in the habit of this.

Calling another day to see the child, while he was dressing her, which took up much time, as there were many different sores, the old man, who was blind, groped his way to the fire place, and sat down. The Clergyman had heard that he was between 90 and 100 years of age, and addressed him by remarking that he was a very old man. He answered, "Aye;" and, after a short pause, he said, "It is well for me that I have lived to be old; but (with a low voice) it was bad for Solomon." The Clergyman asked him what reason he had to say that? He answered, "If Solomon had died when he was young, he would have been





one of the greatest men in the world ; but if I had died when I was young, I should have gone to hell. Solomon lived to disgrace himself ; I have lived to obtain glory." Being asked what reason he had to hope for glory, or on what that hope was built, he answered, "On the love of God my Saviour ; for (says he) when I think that the Lord Jesus Christ died ; that he shed his precious blood on the cross for sinners, I am astonished that any one can ever perish. Oh that blood ! that blood ! sure it would wash away the sins of millions of worlds : but God has said that some will perish ; and I must believe God."

Being asked what reason he had to think that he had an interest in Christ, and was accepted through his blood, he answered, he was sure of it ; he felt it in his heart, he knew that no person that called on Jesus Christ, and depended upon his blood, would be lost. He was then asked how he came by this knowledge ; he answered, "Through the Holy Ghost to be sure ; it is the Holy Ghost has done all for me ; I know it is the Holy Ghost ; though some people, and learned people (meaning the priest and his landlord) would persuade me that the Holy Ghost does not do such things now ; and I often told them, that if he did not, we must all perish in Hell ; for we never could either turn from our sins, or love God, if he did not incline our hearts ; and *that* I never would give up to any man, let him be who he may, that it is the Holy Ghost alone that made me know the love of God, or can make any man, or can do any good in us."

He was then asked whether he had heard any person speak of those things : he said, No. Then how he came to the knowledge of the Bible texts



which he quoted. He said, that about five years before, having become blind, and desiring to prepare his soul, he caused a grandchild of his, that could read, to procure a Bible, which he made him read to him constantly; and that, through reading the Bible, the Lord opened his heart, and made him feel his love. He then broke out into many expressions of praise.

Being afterwards asked, whether he put any trust in the ceremonies of his church? he said, No; he trusted in nothing but Jesus Christ: what other trust had he? that, surely, this was sufficient. As this conversation was often interrupted by the dressing of the child, it was observed, that he was much in prayer during the intervals; and in many conversations that were afterwards held with him on this subject, he always appeared much engaged in prayer; and never was observed an instant, except when speaking or listening, that he was not muttering prayer or praise.

As the Clergyman had some opportunities of seeing him afterwards, in every conversation with him, he found that he evinced the most confirmed faith in, and a clear view of, the fulness and sufficiency of the atonement, and the free mercy of God in Christ. Speaking one day to him on Peter's walking on the water the Clergyman remarked, that the moment Peter doubted, he sunk; the old man was then leaning on his crutch; and raising it up, and striking the ground, he cried out, "And the moment *we* now doubt, we sink. Why should we doubt? Is not God love? Is not Christ love? Was he not love upon the earth? and surely he has not less love now. Yes, Sir, I told that to a man, who said to me, Christ admitted sinners when upon the earth, for he was then humbled



in our flesh; but now he is in glory, we cannot go so freely to him. What! said I, Christ lessen in love or mercy to sinners! No: if he increases in any thing, it is in mercy; I think his love is greater and greater every day;" and then broke out in much praise, which he was constantly doing in all his conversations; while his countenance showed more happiness and delight in the hope he possessed, than seemed possible in so old a man.

Some months after the Clergyman first met him it pleased God to restore him again to his sight and strength; so that he was able to see and walk as upright as ever he did. He then went constantly about among his neighbours, praying them to turn to God, and seek the mercy he offered in Christ Jesus; he used also constantly to tell the priest that he did not preach the Gospel; and one day told him so at the altar, and that he was always representing God as a severe and terrible God, whom the people might be afraid to approach; while he never told them how full of love that God was, what mercy he was willing to show, and how sufficient the blood of Christ was to wash away all sins. He likewise continually reproached the priest with denying the special operation of the Holy Ghost, in order to turn a man to God, change his heart, and enable him to believe on his Son Jesus Christ; and from the manner he constantly spoke of the operation of the Holy Ghost, and the joy and peace he constantly felt, it is to be supposed that he must have enjoyed much of the fellowship of the Spirit, and much communion with God.

In his conversations he seemed to have a very great knowledge of the Bible, and used to quote the promises and passages that spoke of the tender



mercies of God, and make remarks on them: which showed that he was truly taught of God. And when it is considered that this man never had any intercourse with persons who knew even the first principles of the Gospel, living in a retired place, and entirely surrounded by Papists, and five years before had not an idea of religion; that he was brought to this light and knowledge at the age of 90 or more years, it magnifies truly the mercy of God, and the power of his grace, and shows the necessity of sending the word of life, by the circulation of the Bible, to the children of God, which are scattered in the lands of darkness, that they may be gathered to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and be enabled here to feed on the pastures of life, and rejoice in the view of the fulness of him who is their living head; and in the sweet words of peace and eternal life he speaks through his word.

A few pious clergymen who have seen this man, found his spiritual knowledge far above what was described to them; and had reason to praise God in him for his wonderful works.

He died in about a year and a half after the Clergyman first met him; who regretted much that his distance from him, and other engagements, prevented him having many conversations with him, and an opportunity of bringing him to hear the gospel preached, which he purposed; but the Lord, when he had left him long enough to be a witness among the people, took him we trust to join the song of the redeemed in his kingdom of eternal glory.



*Unto Christ that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Rev. i. 5, 6.)*

## THE BIBLE MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD.

PRECIOUS Bible! what a treasure  
Does the word of God afford!  
All I want for life or pleasure,  
FOOD and MED'CINE, SHIELD and SWORD;  
Let the world account me poor,  
Having this I need no more.

Food to which the world's a stranger  
Here my hungry soul enjoys;  
Of excess there is no danger,  
Tho' it fills, it never cloy;  
On a dying Christ I feed,  
He is meat and drink indeed!

When my faith is faint and sickly,  
Or when Satan wounds my mind,  
Cordials to revive me quickly,  
Healing MED'CINES here I find:  
To the promises I flee,  
Each affords a remedy.

In the hour of dark temptation  
Satan cannot make me yield;  
For the word of consolation  
Is to me a mighty SHIELD:  
While the scripture truths are sure,  
From his malice I'm secure.



Shall I envy then the miser,  
 Doating on his golden store?  
 Sure I am, or should be, wiser,  
 I am rich,—'tis he is poor:  
 Jesus gives me in his word,  
 Food and MED'cINE, SHIELD and SWORD.

*"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."* Jesus Christ, John, v. 39.

*"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* John. iii. 3.

*"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."* John, xvii. 3.

*"The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."* 1 John i. 7.

*"Ask, and it shall be given you. If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"* Luke xi. 9. 13.

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